

Wutun language

The **Wutun language** (Chinese: 五屯话; pinyin: *Wǔtún huà*) is a Chinese–Tibetan–Mongolian creolized language. It is spoken by about 2,000 people, most of whom are classified as Monguor (Tu) by the Chinese government. Wutun speakers reside in two villages (Upper Wutun 上五屯 and Lower Wutun 下五屯) of Tongren County, eastern Qinghai province, China.^{[3][4]} It is also known as the Ngandehua language.^[5]

The two Wutun villages, as well as other villages in the area, were under the control of a Mongol banner for several centuries, and have long been regarded by governments as members of a Mongol ethnic group. However, they self-identify as Tibetans.^[4]

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Wutun	
Native to	China
Region	Qinghai province, mainly in Tongren County
Ethnicity	Monguor
Native speakers	(2,000 cited 1995) ^[1]
Language family	<div>mixed Mandarin–Bonan</div>
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	wuh
Glottolog	wutu1241 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/wutu1241) ^[2]

Vocabulary

The greatest portion of Wutun lexical items is Chinese (but with their tones lost); a smaller one, Tibetan; and an even smaller one comes from the Bonan Mongolian language.^[4]

Grammar

The Wutun grammar is of Mongolic type, particularly similar to that of the Bonan language. There is also Tibetan influence.^[4]

History

A number of theories have been proposed about the origin of the Wutun villagers, and their peculiar dialect. The Chinese linguist Chen Naixiong infers from the vowel distribution of the Chinese lexical items in Wutun speech that their ancestors may have spoken an old Nanjing dialect. Others think that they may have

been a group of Hui people (Chinese-speaking Muslims) from Sichuan who, for reasons unknown, converted to Lamaism and moved to eastern Qinghai. In any event, historical documents as old as 1585 attest to the existence of the Wutun community.^[4]

Today's Wutun villagers don't speak Chinese, but the knowledge of Tibetan is common both in Wutun and in Tongren County in general, as the Tibetan language is the *lingua franca* of this multiethnic region, which is populated by Tibetans and Hui people, as well as some Han Chinese and Mongols.^[4]

See also

- Tangwang language
- Dao language (China)

References

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3. Lee-Smith, Mei W.; Wurm, Stephen A. (1996), Wurm, Stephen A.; Mühlhäusler, Peter; Tyron, Darrell T. (eds.), *Atlas of languages of intercultural communication in the Pacific, Asia, and the Americas, Volume 2, Part 1. (Volume 13 of Trends in Linguistics, Documentation Series)* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=glU0vte5gSkC>), Walter de Gruyter, pp. 820, 883, ISBN 3-11-013417-9, retrieved 12 November 2013, "International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, North China: Intercultural communications involving languages other than Chinese"
4. Lee-Smith, Mei W.; Wurm, Stephen A. (1996), "The Wutun language", in Wurm, Stephen A.; Mühlhäusler, Peter; Tyron, Darrell T. (eds.), *Atlas of languages of intercultural communication in the Pacific, Asia, and the Americas, Volume 2, Part 1. (Volume 13 of Trends in Linguistics, Documentation Series)* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=glU0vte5gSkC>), Walter de Gruyter, p. 883, ISBN 3-11-013417-9, retrieved 10 October 2013, "International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, North China: Intercultural communications involving languages other than Chinese"
5. *Asian Highlands Perspectives 36: Mapping the Monguor* (<https://books.google.com/?id=YReNCwAAQBAJ&dq=Ngandehua+language+wutun>). Asian Highlands Perspectives. 2016. p. 276. Retrieved 12 June 2018.

Further reading

- Sandman, Erika (2016). *A Grammar of Wutun* (<http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:ISBN%20978-951-51-2634-4>) (Ph.D. thesis). University of Helsinki. hdl:10138/168427 (<https://hdl.handle.net/10138%2F168427>). ISBN 978-951-51-2633-7.
- Slater, Keith (2009). Review of *Wutun* by J. Janhunen, M. Peltomaa, E. Sandman, and Xiawudongzhuo. (<https://archive.org/details/SlaterKeith.2009.ReviewOfWutunByJJanhunenMPeltomaaESandmanAnd/Asian%20Highlands%20Perspectives%201%20367-371>) *Asian Highlands Perspectives*, 1: 367–371.

External links

- ELAR archive of Wutunhua (五屯話) primary data (<http://elar.soas.ac.uk/deposit/0020>)
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